VIII. *A Letter from Sir* Robert Sibbald *to Dr.* Martin Liſter *Coll. Med. Lond. & S. R. S. containing an Account of ſeveral Shells obſerved by him in* Scotland.

SIR,

I Received yours, and the *Exercitationes Medicinales*, for which I give you many thanks. I am perſwaded the Method you take for promoting Learning is the beſt, your joining the Antient and Modern Learning together, in my Opinion doth both illuſtrate and advance our Art. Your late pieces, I hope, will prevail with ſome to abate of that Contempt they had of the Ancient Phiſitians; your Explaining in your *Exercitatio Anatomica Tertia*, the way the Stone is produced in the Bladder, from the way that Shells and Pearls are produced, and from the Petrifications that are made by Mineral Waters is moſt ſatisfying in my Opinion, and preferable to what I have ſeen Written by any other. I have ſeen ſome of the Stones taken out of the Bladder broak, which conſiſted of many Coats, like the Skins of an Onion. We have ſome Waters that Petrifie. Upon the North ſide of the *Firth* of *Forth*, ſome eight Miles from the City, there is a Cove cloſe upon the Sea, the Roof of which is covered with a *Stalagmites* a Foot deep, like the Fringe of a Bed; the upper coat is of a Sea-colour, the Juice is as white as the *Sal Prunellæ*; the Water which droppeth from it, if it touch the Skin, maketh it ſmart: Near to this ſame Cove, is a piece of an Hollow Rock; which within, from the top to the bottom, is full of ſo many orders of Columns, reſembling the Pipes of a Church-Organ, and ſome of different Figures; I broke a ſmall one and found ſome-

what

what hollow in the middle. All the Ground in this place is full of Lime-ſtone.

You deſired in yours a Collection of Shells from this place, I forbore to write hoping to have gotten ſome, but have not been ſo happy yet, for that there is little or no Communication with the Inhabitants of the Iſles, the Sea is ſo infeſted with Pyrates. I am promiſed by a Friend who is going to *Sky* a Parcel, which if I get them I ſhall ſend to you; in the mean time I thought it might be acceptable to you, to give an Account of the rareſt I have ſeen found here, or in our Iſles: If I could have had your Hiſtoria or *Synopſis Methodica Conchiliorum*, I could have digeſted them in better Order; but tho' I gave ſeveral Commiſſions to our Book-ſellers that went for *London*, I could never have it yet, they ſaid to me it was not to be found in the Shops. I have entreated the Gentleman who delivereth this Letter to you, to know of you where it may be had, I am in hopes to learn much of Shells from it: *Bonani* giveth but little light in this matter.

Of the Univalves.

The rareſt are 1. the *Nautilus Falconeri*, the Shell was ſent me by a Friend from the North, and was broken by lying amongſt the Stones upon the Shoar: The Structure is marvellous where the Animal lyeth, there are two Decks viſible one above another of a Pearl Colour; there is a hole in the upper Deck naturally, thro' which may be ſeen the other Deck at ſome diſtance from the upper, and ſuch another hole in it; the higher part of the Shell which reſembleth a Helmit; where it is broken ſheweth ſeveral vaulted diviſion, betwixt which a Tube paſſeth that is hollow, they are of the Colour of Pearl too. The outmoſt Coat of the Shell is of a dark Grey Colour, which is much worn off in this, and

there

there appeareth a ſmooth Coat, with Brown and White Stroaks.

The next to this is that which *Boccone* in his *Recherches* calleth the *Pediculus Ceti*, it is of one Valve, but what is ſingular, it is open at both ends; the Structure of it, both within, and without, is very curious; the Animal was ſo dryed I could not diſtinguiſh the parts of it, but it muſt be of an odd ſhape if it fit the ſinuous Caverns that are in the inner part of the Shell.

The *Teſtudo Marina Squamoſa* is ſometimes caſt in upon the *Orkney* Iſles, the Shell of one was ſent to me, was two Foot in length, and of a proportionable breadth. There is a great variety of the *Patellæ* or *Limpets* found in the Iſle of *Sky*. Mr. *Martin* my Friend, a curious Gentleman, who was born there, and ſometimes ſtayeth there ſhewed me theſe following.

Beſides the common *Patella* there is one of a middle ſize of a dark Grey Colour, which is much flatter then the common Patella; the Circle about the Peak is of a lighter Colour, there are many *Striæ* runs from the Peak to the Border, and it hath another larger Circle near the Border.

There is another flat one raiſed too of a Grey Colour.

There is a *Conical Limpet* raiſed with the Peak White, and a Circle below it of an Orange Colour, the reſt below that of the ſame Colour variegated with black Spots.

There is a Conical one too of a middle ſize, ſmooth and browniſh with a white Peak.

There is an Oval Limpet of a fucal ſize, thin and tranſparent, the Peak of a dark Colour; in the Convex part below the middle, there are ſome blew Lines very beautiful.

There is a great variety of the Trochi likewiſe.

The *Trochus albidus maculis rubentibus diſtinctus*, a large ſort of the ſame, and a leſſer ſort.

A *Trochus* of a middle ſize of the Colour of Pearl all over, which he told me he took up ſo out of the Sands.

A *Trochus* of a reddiſh Colour, marked with Spots that are dark.

A *Trochus* of a Colour betwixt Blew and Grey, marked with dark Spots, this had a *Cancellus* in it.

And Mr. *Martin* ſaid he was told, that there was in the Iſle of *Sky* a *Trochus* of a Gold Colour.

Cochlea Umbilicata.

There is a ſmall ſort of the *Cochlea Umbilicata*, with Waves of a brown Colour upon a white Ground.

There is a leſſer *Cochlea Umbilicata*, with darker Waves upon a white Ground.

Cochlea Faſciata.

There is a ſmall *Cochlea Faſciata* with the *Faſciæ* brown, upon a white Ground.

Another of that ſort, with the *Faſciæ* darker upon a pale Ground.

A ſmall *Cochlea* Yellow all over.

A ſmall *Cochlea* of an Orange Colour.

A ſmall one of a brown Colour, ſmooth, with waved Lines of a dark Colour.

Nerita.

There is a ſmall *Nerita* of an Orange Colour.

One of the *Cochleæ Convins* of a ſmaller ſort, of an Oker Colour.

Of the Bivalves.

There is great variety of the Pectines we call here *Clams*.

One of the middle ſize, with two Ears very White.

One of a dark Colour, variegated with white ſtroaks and ſpots.

Of the leaſt ſort, about the ſize of the *Roman* Silver Medals, and ſome leſs.

One with two Ears, with Orange Spots, upon a white Ground.

One

One entirely of an Orange Colour.

One of a Purpliſh Colour.

One variegated like a Gilly-flower, with broad purpliſh and white Spots. The Lines of this run tranſverſe.

As do theſe, one with reddiſh and white ſtroaks.

One with white Spots upon an Orange Ground.

One with a white Ground and dark Spots.

With the Lines Perpendicular.

One with two Ears with a dark Ground, and the Lines white and ſtreight.

One of an Ear of a Purpliſh Colour.

One of an Ear Browniſh, the upper part of the Shell raiſed ſomewhat above the edge, and the edge is more ſtriated. *Of the Tellinæ.*

One with white and blew Faſciæ.

One with the Faſciæ yellowiſh and obſcure.

Of the Conchæ læves.

One large with the Faſciæ dark, and ſome white lines running from the Peak to the Border.

One of a middle ſize, with the Faſciæ blewiſh, upon white perpendicular ſtriæ. [Ground.

A third leaſt of all, with white Faſciæ upon a reddiſh

A Pectunculus with a Faſciæ of a greyiſh Colour, and three ſtreight Lines.

A Pecten of a ſmall ſize, conſiſting as it were of 4 Shells, each of them raiſed ſomewhat above another, of a greyiſh blew Colour. *Of the Quinquevalve.*

We have one ſort of the Pholas beſt deſcribed by you.

And the Barnacle which I call *Concha quinquevalvis Animal ſui generis continens variis cirrhis & caudâ rotundâ Rugosâ inſtructum.* Dr. *Balfour* found Eggs in the *Cauda* of it.

If any of theſe ſeem curious, I ſhall endeavour to procure of them for you, and what elſe may be acceptable to you.